

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 09296 281414Z
ACTION SS-25

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O 281356Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD NIACT IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 09296

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, CGEN, UR, US, KS
SUBJECT: SOVIETS RELEASE KAL PILOT AND NAVIGATOR

1. CHIEF SOVIET MFA FIRST FAR EASTERN DEPARTMENT KAPITSA
CALLED IN DCM AFTERNOON OF APRIL 28. KAPITSA
OPENED CONVERSATION BY STATING "WE HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU
FOR THE GREAT MAY 1 HOLIDAY" AND WENT ON TO MAKE THE
FOLLOWING POINTS:

--SOVIET INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND PILOT AND
NAVIGATOR ARE FREE TO LEAVE USSR;

--IN VIEW OF INTEREST SHOWN IN THEM BY U.S., THEY WILL BE
TURNED OVER TO U.S. OFFICIALS;

--PILOT AND NAVIGATOR WILL BE MOVED FROM KEM' TO LENINGRAD
AND WILL BE TURNED OVER TO U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL IN
LENINGRAD APRIL 29 ON CONDITION THAT THEY LEAVE SOVIET
TERRITORY ON THE SAME DAY. TIME AND PLACE OF THEIR
TRANSFER TO U.S. CUSTODY WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO CONGEN
LENINGRAD BY DIPLOMATIC AGENCY IN LENINGRAD;
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--CONGEN LENINGRAD WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ONWARD
TRANSPORTATION TO POINT OUTSIDE USSR. UPON SUBSEQUENT
QUESTIONING KAPITSA STATED THAT ONWARD TRANSPORTATION
ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD BEST BE MADE FOR "SECOND HALF" OF
APRIL 29;

--PILOT AND NAVIGATOR INSIST, IN MOST CATEGORICAL FASHION,
THAT NO REPEAT NO NEWS BE RELEASED TO PRESS REGARDING
THEIR WHEREABOUTS OR TIME AND ROUTE OF DEPARTURE.

2. WE STRONGLY URGE THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE TO AVOID
PUBLICITY ON THIS DEVELOPMENT UNTIL PILOT AND NAVIGATOR
HAVE DEPARTED USSR.

3. REQUEST LENINGRAD NOTIFY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OPTIONS FOR DEPARTURE OF PILOT AND NAVIGATOR LATER PART
OF APRIL 29. REQUEST DEPARTMENT PROVIDE FISCAL DATA
FOR PURCHASE OF TICKETS. LENINGRAD SHOULD HAVE CONSULAR
OFFICER ACCOMPANY PILOT AND NAVIGATOR TO FIRST STOP OUT-
SIDE USSR. TOON

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